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ABSTRACT

The result of an institute held prior to the International Reading Association convention in 1977, this document focuses on competency requirements for various roles held by reading professionals and on training students of education to meet those competencies. Articles included in this document deal with the following specific topics: matching graduate program components with the training requirements of reading professionals; the training needs of instructors of compensatory reading in the junior college; the job demands of school district reading instructors; the competency needs of state reading consultants; and research training requirements for reading professionals. (DF)

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Robert A. Palmatier, Editor

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[Competency Requirements for Reading Professionals]

EPISTLE

The Publication Forum of
Professors of Reading Teacher Educators
A Special Interest Group of the
International Reading Association

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Dr. Palmatier is a professor of Elementary Education at Northwestern State University of Louisiana in Natchitoches. This article was prepared as an introduction to the pre-convention institute from which all of the papers in this issue were taken. The institute was sponsored by the Professors of Reading Teacher Educators Special Interest Group at the 1977 IRA Convention

MEETING THE TRAINING REQUIREMENTS FOR TODAY'S READING PROFESSIONALS WITH GRADUATE PROGRAM COMPONENTS

Robert A. Palmatier

The determination of training requirements assumes the training goal is known. Experience with students leads me to feel this assumption is unwarrented, at least in the field of reading. In addition to limited student knowledge of future career directions and the accompanying required competencies, the field has tended to avoid any in-depth role descriptions for reading professionals. The purpose of this institute is to instigate further steps in that direction.

The Professors of Reading Teacher Educators (PRTE) Special Interest Group has repeatedly attempted to expand awareness of potential positions for reading graduates to categories other than professors in teacher education programs. Annual meetings of PRTE have provided forums for potential employers and graduate students to present their concerns and advice on this topic. In addition, several articles relevant to the issue have appeared in earlier issues of EPISTLE (Allington, 1976a; Allington, 1976b; Burtch, et.al., 1975; Mountain, 1976; Nelson, 1976; Oliver, 1976; Palmatier, 1975; Sullivan, 1977).

Concern that the supply of advanced degree holders is rapidly becoming over-abundant for the available positions has been voiced by many reading professionals. Thus, it makes good sense to look for new types of positions in which to place graduates. Achieving such placements is not a sufficient level of professional concern. Care must be taken to insure that advanced degree holders in reading are qualified to hold positions in school district administration, junior college reading improvement, state department program leadership, research projects, professional organization offices, federal reading projects, publishing houses, etc. First, it is necessary to determine the qualifications or

look first at change from a programatic view. Next, I will list some factors from the student view and then go on to difficulties in determining actual job training demands.

Factors to be faced in achieving change include:

Program View

1. Few students come with firm directions toward a job.

2. Students tend to be passive and expect advisors to decide needs for them.

3. Faculty relate needs mostly to own experiences.

4. Student background rather than future is given undue attention.

5. Courses rather than competencies control program design.

6. Need to maintain and support facilities and staff reduces freedom to change.

7. Demand for specialized training areas is often a fleeting "in vogue" experience.

8. Federal "windfalls" often force alterations in program emphasis and faculty time commitments.

9. Reading course offerings are often limited due to comparison with subject area disciplines.

10. Relating directly to field needs and endeavoring to provide field-based training is EXPENSIVE!

Student View

1. Looks for "good" courses and most often evaluates on traditional "course" concepts.

2. Strives to meet requirements in terms of credit hours and course titles rather than job needs.

3. Reason for being in school is often escape from past position rather than due to specific direction for future.

4. Tends to model after graduate professors rather than seeking a role to fill based on job needs.

5. Has low level of "real" understanding concerning what requirements will be for various positions.

competencies required by such positions. Other presentations on this program look at specific competencies required by reading professionals in some roles outside teacher education. Since these represent only a beginning look at a few of the potential job roles, such effort must continue. Second, training programs must be modified to provide the training desired and/or needed to allow graduates to adapt to reading positions outside teacher education. This statement implies that doctoral programs in reading are currently training graduates to be college professors. Such an implication is not intended. In fact, I feel that few programs offer specific training in professional skills. Rather, knowledge of theory and practice related to reading instruction is nearly the total concern in most graduate programs. Need exists for improvement of efforts directed to the development of professional competencies.

The concept of adding professional competency development to graduate training programs raises the question of, "How does this affect present scholarship goals?" Adding job function skills to program objectives does not necessitate reduction of scholarship goals. In fact, most studies of required job function skills place knowledge of subject matter at or near the top of the list.

One change worthy of mention falls in the category of expanding the knowledge base requirements for an advanced degree in reading. Seminar content, practicum activity, and library research should include study of various positions held by reading professionals. Such study compares to the concept of career education, where future job choices are facilitated and guided by the development of accurate information bases and evaluation skills. An understudy or internship program, where students sample several job roles through working along side a reading professional, is one approach to consider. Since many professors also serve as consultants, authors, reviewers, workshop leaders, evaluators, grant proposal writers, part-time administrators, researchers, etc., change might only involve restructuring to allow for professor and student interaction in settings and job activities outside the lecture and seminar rooms.

The above idea requires only minor revision but demands staff commitment to the concept of responsibility for more than scholarship. Such a commitment is not easily achieved. Assuming agreement, to move in this direction exists, attention must be turned to some of the difficulties in coming to grip with the concept of "changing training requirements." Responsible change comes only when present status is clearly understood and there is willingness to give up current comfort factors. First, I feel those factors which make it difficult for us to change within the college and university setting should be detailed. My perspective is to

Determining Job Training Needs

1. Little effort has been given to determining the exact nature of various jobs in reading.

2. Research has centered upon prioritizing of theoretical competencies rather than upon time and activity studies.

3. Sorting out all of the training and experience factors from which a competency is developed takes much time and insight.

4. Teacher training and professor roles are most often viewed only in terms of course teaching.

5. Methods of teaching students have been shielded from careful scrutiny and development by the concepts of academic freedom and individuality.

6. False dichotomy has been created with scholarship and performance competencies as apparently polar opposites.

The above items represent only a portion of the total picture. For a more complete view and some valid bases for action further study and articulation is a must. It is essential that efforts be expanded to seek direction for program change through dialogue with potential employers and individuals already holding positions similar to those in which we might place our graduates. However, though reading is a field which exists because of communication and the demand for it, we seem to feel only limited need to practice communicating. The remaining presentations and discussions planned for this institute are designed to begin at least part of the necessary information exchange.

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THE JUNIOR COLLEGE READING INSTRUCTOR: A SPECTRUM OF CURRICULA TO MEET THE SPECTRUM OF DEMANDS

M. Jean Hiler

Until recently, few graduate students or graduate faculty recognized the career opportunities and educational challenges presented to the reading specialist at a junior college. Most considered the junior college "a stopping off place" until a position at a university or four year college became available.

Because of the scarcity of openings at senior institutions, however, more and more graduates have accepted permanent teaching positions at the junior college level. Much to their chagrin, they have discovered that the curriculum which they completed to earn a degree in Reading Education did little to prepare them for the spectrum of teaching assignments encountered there. At no other level is there a greater variety in course offerings, greater diversity in students' backgrounds and abilities, and greater demand for flexibility and innovation. Here reading specialists are expected to be able to teach in the regular college program, in community service programs, and in remedial programs with equal ease.

Limited budgets coupled with community and student demands force most junior college administrators to seek faculty members who are qualified to teach in one or more disciplines. Therefore, the reading specialist may very well find himself assigned to teach education courses or psychology courses, as well as developmental reading courses within the regular college credit curriculum. Although the reading instructor, undoubtedly, has had several courses in education and psychology and numerous courses in reading, he often discovers that his background prevents him from teaching in each of these areas with confidence. How deep is his knowledge of curriculum design, teaching methods, learning theory, motivation? What has he learned in his degree program about materials, equipment, and tests that are appropriate for use with the young adult who is reading on the college level but wishes to improve his reading ability?

In recent years the junior college has become more than a "feeder institution" for senior colleges and universities. The current thrust in the majority of junior colleges is to make the institution the focal point of education within the community at large. Thriving institutions have been successful in winning the confidence of community leaders. Daily, requests are made by business, industry, and professional groups for courses designed to meet their particular educational needs.

As a member of the junior college faculty, the reading specialist is called upon to play a variety of roles in community service programs. These roles range from requests to design and teach courses in speed reading for adults, or specialized reading courses for secretaries, executives, or blue collar workers, to reading courses to teach anxious parents how to help "Johnny" read better. Since most of these courses must be designed and implemented within the span of a week or two, the instructor must possess the ability to establish objectives, the knowledge of appropriate materials, the drive to innovate and implement new programs, and the basic interest and belief in people which allows him to relate to those with varying backgrounds.

Other demands made upon the junior college reading teacher by community service programs include (1) consultation with area school systems and teachers; (2) service as a "reading expert" in court cases; (3) "evaluation" of the children of prominent citizens; (4) education of the public concerning the need for reading programs at the college level. In addition to specialized knowledge, most of these assignments require diplomatic skill.

The main area of concern for most reading instructors at the junior/community college level, however, is their role in remedial programs. With almost universal acceptance of the "open door policy" in junior colleges across the nation, and with SAT scores falling nationwide, it is not surprising that large numbers of students seeking admission to college are unable to read college texts. To deal with this problem, most junior/community colleges have established reading courses for those who exhibit deficiencies in reading. Completion of these courses is usually required before enrollment in the regular college curriculum.

The design, development, and implementation of these courses is the responsibility of the reading specialist. Where no organizational scheme is dictated, the optimum plan must be determined. Where no goals have been established, clear-cut, reasonable objectives must be stated. Where no suitable evaluative instruments are available, valid tests must be constructed. Where appropriate materials and equipment are lacking, they must be designed.

have not developed the curiosity which propels one to learn, nor have they discovered the satisfaction derived from being able to transfer knowledge gained from one discipline to another. The chief goal in education seems to be the grade or the degree - not a greater depth of knowledge. Therefore, many have unrealistic educational and life goals; they have no real view of the amount of ability, knowledge, time, and/or money required to attain the goals they have established. In addition, many have such low self concepts that failure is almost insured unless something occurs to bring about a change. For this reason the student-instructor relationship in a junior college is a very special one. Each instructor must be capable of establishing rapport with students and giving counsel to bring about positive change. Some graduate courses in motivation and reinforcement, the self-concept, group dynamics, interpersonal relationships, and counseling should be included in the curriculum of those aspiring to teach at the junior college level.

Although formal course work is essential to develop the background knowledge necessary to teach at any level, there are some skills required of the junior college remedial reading teacher which can only be acquired through day-to-day involvement in a program. Although knowledge about the individualized approach to teaching may be acquired through graduate courses, the ability to organize and successfully implement this approach is an art gained through experience. Since so many reading specialists at the junior college level are required to develop programs, utilize innovative teaching methods, and design teaching materials and evaluative instruments, graduate programs for these students must include a period of internship in a successful college remedial program.

In conclusion, new graduate programs must be designed to prepare students for the spectrum of teaching opportunities encountered at the junior college level. The demand for trained professionals at this level is great; the supply is non-existent. Therefore, graduate students should be encouraged to explore the opportunities available at the junior college and they should be provided with a curriculum especially designed to help them meet these challenges.

Few advanced degree programs are presently designed to give the graduate student the knowledge and skills expected of him as a junior college instructor. Since the demand for well trained reading specialists at the junior college level is great, it would appear that graduate programs should be designed or modified to meet this need. Such programs would necessarily include a spectrum of course work designed to train prospective instructors how to induce cognitive and affective changes in their students. In addition, the program should include in-service training and practical projects which would result in changes within the graduate students themselves.

All master teachers, like master craftsmen, must know the fundamentals of their trade. Therefore, it is essential that those aspiring to teach at the junior college level know not only how learning occurs, but also how to apply this knowledge in a practical situation and to various disciplines.

In order to bring about cognitive changes in students, instructors themselves must so thoroughly understand the skills which they are teaching that they can explain each one in an analytic, step-by-step process. Therefore, degree candidates must be required to know all of the reading skills before attempting to diagnose and remediate the reading problems of others.

The heart of any remedial reading program centers around accurate diagnosis of student's strengths and weaknesses. At the college level no diagnostic test exists which is broad enough to cover all reading levels and skill deficiencies presented by the students. As a result, it is essential that the specialist be aware of all the available tests and the strengths and limitations of each. Often the instructor is required to combine the results of several tests, or to design his own diagnostic instrument, to get an accurate picture of his students' needs.

Even though publishers are now racing to get materials on the market, at present few thoughtfully prepared materials exist for use at this level. As a result, most junior college instructors find that they must develop supplementary materials and additional materials to deal with those skills not stressed in materials on the market. Materials design can prove to be a trying experience if the specialist has not had sufficient preparation in developing innovative ideas and the use of audio-visual techniques.

One of the areas of greatest concern to successful junior college instructors in all programs - regular, community service, and remedial - is the implementation of affective change. Many of the students who enroll in a junior college have self-induced learning problems. They

- Help write grant proposals.

- Attend hearings with legislators.

- Teach a graduate Language Arts course for 60 teachers in Alamance County.

April, 1976 - Plan and carry out Alamance County's First Annual Reading Seminar.

- Speak to PTA meetings about school's reading program.

May, 1976 - Plan with faculties for next year.

Summer, 1976 - Teach a graduate Reading course for 60 teachers.

- Write journal articles.

- Present results of standardized achievement tests to the School Board and the press.

September, 1976 - Write a series of newspaper articles debunking the "phonics only" solution to the reading problem.

- Do some radio interviews on the same topic.

- Help give IRI's.

- Help teachers group and organize for instruction.

October - November, 1976 - MATERNITY LEAVE

December, 1976 - Prepare and present NRC research paper.

January - February, 1977 - Teach graduate diagnosis course.

- Conduct a 15-hour inservice in developing comprehension and vocabulary skills for all fourth- and fifth-grade teachers.

- Conduct a ten-hour inservice for Middle School Math and Science teachers.

March, 1977 - PTA meetings

- Alamance County's Second Annual Reading Seminar

Dr. Cunninghan currently serves as Reading Director for Alamance County Schools in Graham, North Carolina. In addition she is an adjunct professor of reading at the University of North Carolina--Chapel Hill. She is a textbook author and frequent contributor to professional journals.

ON BECOMING A READING DIRECTOR, OR ON ENDING UP SOME PLACE YOU NEVER WERE GOING

Patricia M. Cunningham

There is an old saying in my family that "You never know from where you stand where you are going to sit." My present position as Reading Director for the Alamance County Schools would support the inherent wisdom of such old sayings. Never in my seven years of public school teaching or during my doctoral program did it ever occur to me that I might become one of those snooty ladies who sit around the central office writing memos and occasionally emerge (attired in spike heels, long dangly earrings, and a smartly tied scarf) to pounce upon the schools, and offer "constructive criticism" and ask "how things are going."

When I happened upon this job, I made three promises to myself: 1) I will never send out a memo, 2) I will never offer unsolicited constructive criticism, and 3) I will never go from room to room asking "how things are going." If, however, I was not going to perform any of these traditional supervisor functions, I must find some alternative activities to fill the hours and give the appearance of busyness and indispensability. Some entries from my daily logs may provide some insights into some of these alternative activities:

November, 1975 - Put up reading exhibit at shopping mall.

- Retest eighth graders most of whom were inappropriately tested and have been on frustration level for three months.

December, 1975 - Present research study at NRC meeting.

- Begin to conduct 30 hour inservice for all principals and central office staff.

January - February, 1976 - Teach a series of ten five-hour mini-courses for 200 teachers, K-12.

March, 1976 - Visit all K-8 Classrooms. (Don't ask how things are going!).

April, 1977 - Prepare for "Read with your Child Week" including:

1. bumper stickers
2. parade
3. library activities
4. school activities
5. television and radio programs

May, 1977 - Book Review, JRB

- Plan Model Middle School Curriculum Project.
- Prepare Preconvention Institute Speech - IRA.

Trying to determine what competencies one would need to have in order to successfully carry out these varied activities was akin to trying to list the competencies needed to be a successful wife, mistress, cook, homemaker, hostess and mother!! After much rumination, I concluded that one would need expertise in five general areas:

(1) The accumulated Wisdom and Folklore of Reading and Language Arts (17)

(2) The unique social institution called public schools (1)

(3) The Science of Research and Statistics (7)

(4) The art of Communicating (Speaking and Writing to professionals and the masses) (1)

(5) A persuasive talent and temperament (1)

In order to determine how well my graduate program had trained me to carry out my present job, I listed all the courses I had taken at the graduate level and then tried to determine for which of the five general areas they had trained me. The numbers beside the areas listed above indicate the number of graduate courses which were pertinent to each area. From thirty-eight graduate courses taken at three major state universities, seventeen provided me with information about the reading/language process, seven provided me with the skills needed to carry out and analyze research. The other three areas did not fare as well. The only preparation I could discover in my academic program for the way schools

operate was a course titled "Trends in Teaching." An audio-visuals materials course was the only formal training I had in written and spoken communication nd a supervision course was my training in persuasiveness.

Fortunately, my seven years experience as a teacher, reading specialist, and curriculum coordinator provided me with experience in the schools area. For the communications and persuasiveness areas, however, I was unprepared by my academic work or my professional experiences.

To the question: "Could the doctoral program have better trained you for the role you are now following?", I would have to answer "yes."

The doctoral program could have prepared me better in the areas of communication and persuasiveness. Regardless of the path one chooses to follow after completion of a doctoral program in reading, one is required to tell and sell. A course, in which I was required to write a series of newspaper articles explaining why phonics is not the solution to the reading problem or prepare a speech for the legislature convincing them that simply testing every student to make sure he had obtained basic reading competencies before he is awarded a diploma is not going to solve the reading problem, would have been invaluable to me.

To the question: "Should the doctoral program have been differentiated according to the role one planned to play once the eminent degree was bestowed?", I would have to answer "no." Having no intention of sitting where I now sit when I stood in the midst of my doctoral program, I would not have chosen the "public school reading director" option had it existed.

. . . and now if I could just find my heels, earrings, and scarf, I really must finish this memo and go visit the schools to see how things are going these last few days. Perhaps, someone out there may even need a little constructive criticism!

Dr. Cheek speaks about state reading consultants from five years experience as Florida State Right-To-Read Director. She moved this year from Augusta College (Georgia) to a faculty position at Louisiana State University in Baton Rouge.

A LOOK AT COMPETENCIES FOR THE STATE READING CONSULTANT

Martha Collins Cheek

Competencies for teachers, competencies for administrators, competencies for college and university professors--but where along the way is consideration being given to the competencies of those persons working within State Departments of Education? In reviewing the literature, it seems that little has been done in this area. However, it seems only logical that this should be an area of concern as these persons are most closely involved with the study of competencies for other educators. In addition, they have very influential positions which often have great impact in determining the educational programs within a state. Thus, the competencies or necessary areas of study should be ascertained. This study specifically addresses the competencies needed by the reading consultant in a State Department of Education.

Reading educators are vitally concerned that teachers and administrators have training in the teaching of reading. In fact, many states have new certification changes which reflect this concern. There has been so much effort on trying to get many educators trained in reading that little attention has been given to what could be the most vital position(s) in reading in a state--the position of state reading consultant.

As one attempts to identify competencies necessary for a state reading consultant, one major limitation prevails. That is one of identifying the role of the state reading consultant. This role varies from state to state. In fact, it can be said that the role varies for the person within the state from hour to hour!

Ahern and White (1974) polled state and provincial consultants throughout the United States and Canada concerning the consultants' influence on reading in their locales. The replies serve only to reinforce the fact that there is a wide discrepancy in the roles of the state reading consultant. The study also pointed out that these persons have other responsibilities in addition to that of state reading consultant, including Right to Read coordinator and language

arts consultant. These wide differences were attributed to several factors such as;

1. the degree of state control of local education;

2. the political structure in the state;

3. the nature of the position;

4. the experience on the job; and

5. the training for the position.

There is no question that each of these factors influence the functions of the state reading consultant. However, as a former state reading consultant, I believe that training for the position is a most crucial element. With the leadership skills necessary to assume this position, one must have training in other areas in order to feel competent to work with other reading educators within the state. It is only by demonstrating competencies in carrying out the duties of the position that the consultant will establish credibility with these people and have the necessary influence on reading education within the state. Unless the consultant has the respect and support of other educators within the state and local agencies, little can be done to effect change in reading at the state level.

These concerns have not been voiced previously for several reasons. The first is that for many years persons have been shifted into various positions in state agencies, often with little concern for qualifications for the job. Thus, the state reading consultant often had little or no training in the teaching of reading. In many instances, state agencies did not see a need for training. School districts found themselves with persons better qualified than this "state reading consultant." Therefore, the position was often not acknowledged by the districts.

In a state with a trained person in the position, there was usually only a single individual, and he or she found it virtually impossible to scratch the surface of development needs, due to the many daily crises which arose. Thus, little personal assistance was available to the local districts. Therefore, once again local districts and colleges and universities learned to operate independently seeking little assistance from the state reading consultant.

For these reasons, a very vital position within the state has been overlooked. Reading educators have learned to operate without the support and assistance of this position. Through increased emphasis on reading improvement and the effort of Right to Read, the trend seems to be changing. Most State Departments of Education are hiring

reading consultants. These persons are trained in many areas--some in reading, some in elementary education, others in administration and supervision, and still others in secondary education. In many states, because of the recognized need, there are now several persons hired to share the responsibilities of this position.

To personalize this change, let's look at one state and the modifications which have occurred in reading positions within the State Department of Education. Prior to 1971, there was no state reading consultant. The duties were carried out by a language arts consultant who was responsible for all areas of language arts, kindergarten through grade twelve. In 1971, one reading consultant was hired. In 1972, a half time assistant was hired with financial assistance from Right to Read. By 1973, two full time reading consultants were employed for Right to Read with the third position funded by the state. In 1974, two additional state positions were added and in 1975 a third Right to Read position was created. The most recent addition was in 1976 when a secondary reading consultant was hired. Thus, in 1977, we see a State Department of Education with seven reading consultants now paid by state funds compared to no reading staff prior to 1971.

What relationship does this information have to the discussion of competencies for the state reading consultant? For years, little attention has been given to training persons to assume this leadership role for reading at the state level. There was either no such position in the state or only one position for which qualifications were not always specified. This has changed. Most states now have at least one state reading consultant with many states having several such positions. Thus, the time for developing training programs to meet this demand has slipped upon us. But what competencies are needed by persons filling this role? How do different groups view the competencies needed for this position? These are the questions that this research addresses. More questions are probably raised than answered, however, this is a beginning to study a new area of concern--the competencies needed by a state reading consultant.

The Procedure

To gain insight into the answer to these questions, a list of possible competencies needed by the state reading consultant was sent to various persons affected by the position including district reading supervisors, college and university professors, Right to Read directors, and persons presently or formally serving as state reading consultants. The competencies included in the survey instrument were those

listed by the author as being important to the position of state reading consultant. This information was based on five years of experience in the position.

The persons receiving the survey form were asked to select from a given list, the competencies which they felt were needed by a state reading consultant. They were asked to add other competencies as necessary. A second response step asked that the selected competencies be ranked from most important to least important. Table 1 presents a copy of the survey form.

Copies of the survey form were mailed to fifty-seven (57) persons in State Departments of Education, forty-six (46) persons in colleges and universities, and thirty-three (33) persons serving as reading supervisors at the district level. Table 2 presents a summary of the number of returns.

TABLE 2

Number and Percentage of Survey Forms Sent and Returned

	Sent	Received*	Percentage
Colleges & Universities	46	23	50%
School Districts	33	22	67
State Departments (SDOE)	57	37	65
TOTALS	136	82	60

*Four (4) of the survey forms which were returned were not used in the summary of the data because of insufficient information.

The Findings

Data were analyzed by keeping separate the returns from each of the groups--the college and university professors, the district supervisors, and the state department of education personnel. As the responses were received, they

TABLE 1

Survey Response Form

In my opinion, a reading consultant for the State Department of Education should have specialized competencies within the following areas: (Place a check mark in the first column.)

_____	_____	Training techniques for staff development.
_____	_____	Educational or psychological measurement or testing.
_____	_____	Literature for children or adolescents.
_____	_____	Change agentry/human relations skills such as problem-solving techniques, observation techniques, techniques for developing teamwork relationships.
_____	_____	Designing a reading program.
_____	_____	Implementing a reading program.
_____	_____	Administering a reading program.
_____	_____	Working with classroom teachers and others in improving the total reading program.
_____	_____	Identifying successful programs in action.
_____	_____	Identifying potential funding sources.
_____	_____	Demonstrating organization and management skills in the classroom.
_____	_____	Conducting needs assessments in reading.
_____	_____	Developing comprehensive plans in reading.
_____	_____	Evaluating reading programs.
_____	_____	Evaluating reading materials.
_____	_____	Interpreting professional research.
_____	_____	Evaluating reading skills.
_____	_____	Knowledge of the reading skills.
_____	_____	Knowledge of techniques to use in content reading.
_____	_____	Knowledge of the language arts skills.
_____	_____	Training in child growth and development.
_____	_____	OTHERS--_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

In the second column, please rank order those competencies that you checked or added on the list. The one that you feel is the most important should be assigned the number one (1).

Thank you for your assistance. I appreciate the time that you have taken from your busy schedule to complete this form. If you wish to have a copy of the summary of this form, please give mailing information below or send a separate request:

Name_____

Address_____

were recorded on a tally sheet for each of the groups. The tallies were ranked and a correlation done using the Spearman rank-order correlation procedure. The rankings of the competencies by the various groups are given in Table 3. The correlations between the different groups are presented in Table 4.

TABLE 4

Correlations Between Rankings of Competencies for State Reading Consultants

	Colleges/ Universities	Districts	SDOE
Colleges/Universities	---	.58	.78
Districts	.58	---	.79
SDOE	.78	.79	---

SDOE = State Department of Education

By averaging the rankings of the competencies in the three groups, a summary listing of competencies can be presented. It is important to note that because many of these competencies were so close in scores that the final ranking should not be considered as an absolute one through twenty ranking. Rather they are reported as the eleven most important competencies followed by eleven other important competencies. This summary is presented in Table 5.

Based on the data collected in this study, it seems that there is some degree of agreement among college and university professors, school district supervisors, and state department of education personnel as to the competencies needed by a state reading consultant. However, the data indicates that there is a greater degree of agreement between state department of education personnel and the district supervisors and the state department of education personnel and the colleges and universities than between the districts and colleges and universities.

This finding may be most significant to colleges and universities as they develop training programs for state

TABLE 3

Rank Order of Competencies Needed
by a State Reading Consultant as Determined
by State Reading Consultants, School District
Supervisors, and College and University Professors

Competencies	State Consultants	School Supervisors	Professors
Training techniques for staff development	2	3	2
Educational or psychological measurement or testing	16	17	17
Literature for children or adolescents	21	22	21
Change agentry/human relations skills . . .	1	2	7
Designing a reading program	3	7	5
Implementing a reading program	6	10	4
Administering a reading program	8	18	8
Working with classroom teachers and others . . .	9	9	3
Identifying successful programs in action	14	5	18
Identifying potential funding sources	17	19	19
Proposal writing skills	15	20	20
Demonstrating organization & management skills in the classroom	19	21	11
Conducting needs assessments . . .	7	6	10
Developing comprehensive plans . . .	4	4	13
Evaluating reading programs	11	8	9
Evaluating reading materials	18	15	16
Interpreting professional research	22	13	15
Evaluating reading skills	13	14	14
Knowledge of the reading skills	5	1	1
Knowledge of techniques to use in content reading	12	12	6
Knowledge of the language arts skills	10	11	12
Training in child growth and development	20	16	22

TABLE 5

Summary of Competencies Needed by
State Reading Consultants

Eleven Most Important Competencies:

-Knowledge of the reading skills.
-Training techniques for staff development.
-Change agentry/human relations skills such as problem-solving techniques, observation techniques for developing teamwork relationships.
-Designing a reading program.
-Implementing a reading program.
-Developing comprehensive plans in reading.
-Working with classroom teachers and others in improving the total reading program.
-Conducting needs assessments in reading.
-Evaluating reading programs.
-Knowledge of techniques to use in content reading.
-Knowledge of the language arts skills.

Eleven Other Important Competencies:

-Administering a reading program.
-Identifying successful programs in action.
-Evaluating reading skills.
-Educational or psychological measurement or testing.
-Interpreting professional research.
-Evaluating reading materials.
-Demonstrating organization and management skills in the classroom.
-Identifying potential funding sources.
-Proposal writing skills.
-Training in child growth and development.
-Literature for children or adolescents.

reading consultants. Colleges and universities must listen and respond to the needs and expectations of school districts as much of the state reading consultant's time is spent in working with school district staff.

In addition, it may be important to note that of the eighty-two (82) forms returned only one additional competency was identified by more than one person as being important to the position. This competency was "knowledge of linguistics" and was added to the list on two forms returned

by college and university professors. There were no other competencies added with a frequency greater than one (1). An added statement to five (5) of the forms was that classroom experience was necessary.

Summary

The results of this study indicate that there are certain specified competencies needed by a person serving as a state reading consultant. These competencies vary slightly in the degree of importance when different position groups are surveyed.

The competencies which were ranked the highest by state department of education personnel and district supervisors should be carefully studied by colleges and universities as training programs for potential state reading consultants are developed. In addition, it is essential that these competencies be considered by State Departments of Education as they hire personnel to fill the position of state reading consultant.

The study should be followed by other studies to determine answers to several questions:

1. How many graduate level training programs prepare persons to meet these competencies?

2. What competencies are developed in the present graduate level training programs from which state reading consultants graduate?

3. What competencies do present state reading consultants feel that they possess and where were each of the competencies developed (pre-service, in-service, experience)?

4. What competencies are needed for the various roles of the state reading consultant?

Thus, this study is only a beginning step to identify the specific competencies needed by the state reading consultant. Much further research is needed to verify the competencies identified in this study and to expand our knowledge as the above questions are answered.

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RESEARCH TRAINING IN READING

John T. Guthrie

Temptations for Researchers

In the field of research in reading there are three major temptations. Each of these is beguiling and engulfs great numbers of well-intentioned investigators. The first temptation is that of the professional scientist. His reasoning goes that since he has learned the scientific method, he is qualified to study nearly any problem. His methods of investigation are general and suitable for all areas of behavioral science, including education and psychology. He believes that not having subject matter information in a particular area does not limit his potential to study the topic, since the operation of the scientific method is universal. This implies that one can contribute to the body of knowledge about a topic for which one has no knowledge. An absurdity, of course! However, a number of institutions espouse this viewpoint, including Educational Testing Service, Stanford Research Institute, Abt Associates, and Research for Better Schools, an N.I.E. educational laboratory. There are many examples of research conducted in these institutions by professional scientists who were ignorant of the field they were investigating. The results were unsuccessful and yield no fruits to our store of knowledge (this is not to say that these institutions have not also conducted some studies that were valuable).

The second temptation is that of the bleeding heart in quest of truth. Great numbers of seasoned practitioners who have substantial expertise in their areas, and often long experience, believe they are qualified to carry out research. We are all familiar with reading specialists who plan,

conduct, and publish studies with their backs turned to the canons of behavioral science. More often than not, the studies are naive, fallacious, and misleading. The investigators behave as though each of us were innately endowed with the scientific method and that we are able to call forth the procedures of good research by the mere exercise of intention. We aren't!

The third temptation is that of the methodological boomerang. In this case, a technically competent person begins with a method such as factor analysis, miscue analysis, or banal analysis. He applies it to a suspicious looking domain, regardless of its suitability. He analyzes the results and ends up where he began, with nothing. Having found nothing, he invariably begins to search again and repeats the cycle, and repeats the cycle.

These temptations are one factor to consider in developing future training in reading. A second factor is the supply and demand in the research labor force. The National Academy of Sciences in 1976 released the study on "Personnel Needs and Training for Biomedical and Behavioral Research." Drawing on assessments of manpower needs from the Office of Education and the National Institutes of Health, they concluded that the supply of behavioral researchers is increasing rapidly. In 1973, there were 31,800 behavioral scientists at the doctoral level. Between 1973 and 1976, there was a 12% growth rate annually. It was estimated that the annual growth rate of doctorates in the behavioral sciences will be 8.8% from 1976-1979. The growth of professionals in reading is illustrated by the fact that the number of institutions offering graduate programs in reading rose 25% between 1973 and 1976, based on entried in the Graduate Programs and Faculty in Reading.

Supply and Demand

The demand for behavioral scientists is slightly declining. Two factors influence demand most strongly: 1) expenditures for research and development, and 2) total enrollments in colleges and universities. The growth rate in dollar expenditures for R & D decreased between the periods of 1961 to 1973 to a low of 3%. The total federal funding for the social aspects of psychology (including reading) decreased from 21.5 million in 1966 to 20.9 million in 1976, a drop of 3% in actual dollars (Kiesler, 1977). The total graduate and undergraduate enrollments decreased from 1961 to 1973 to 6.8% annual growth.

These pressures of supply and demand place a squeeze on the reading researchers. There are fewer dollars per investigator and fewer students per professor. Many behavioral scientists are taking positions in which their research training is not used or is inappropriate. Consequently, in the

near future graduate training programs are likely to require students to be conversant in an increasingly large number of subject matter areas, expert in more than one research method, and productive of more research that is more systematic.

Qualities of Researchers

The contemporary researcher in reading who is flourishing today and who will help shape the future embodies a range of elusive qualities. Foremost among these is knowledge. A researcher worth his salt is, at the very least, a repository of useful facts. What is known in his field of specialization with at least some degree of certainty, he knows. Anyone can hold an opinion. But it is the researcher's obligation to have his opinions informed by knowledge that has been publically verified. Teachers, clinicians, legislators, and administrators often make requests for factual information about reading. Seldom are the facts immediately accessible. A professional with expertise in research must know how to help the questioner modify his inquiry to make contact with the available structure of information. Not that he should give an answer to a question that was not asked. But the original issue can often be enlightened following a dialogue between the person making the inquiry and the person who is the keeper of available knowledge.

A second quality is problem-solving. Researchers know how to identify societal problems and/or issues that are worthy of investigation. Problem identification usually results from communication with segments of society outside the technical area of expertise. This may include the State Department of Education, a test developer, a set of individualized reading materials, a diagnostic clinic, a linguist or a lawyer. Having identified a problem, the researcher knows how to combine knowledge from a diversity of disciplines to solve it. This often requires combining facts, theories, and conceptual frameworks across traditional disciplinary boundaries. If the problem persists after available strategies for solution have been tried, as it usually does, nontraditional strategies of investigation are needed. Unique problems require unique strategies of study and solution. Commonplace methodologies alienate unique problems rather than promote our closer inspection of them. Essential to the process of problem-solving is knowing when to stop. A researcher has criteria for when a problem has been solved and a sense for when to communicate his findings.

Researchers have the mind of a critic. Doubts about the conclusions of other investigators, public denouncements of false statements, and thorough critiques are part of his repertoire. A few examples of criticism have occurred in behavioral science and reading. The outcomes of the Coleman report provoked reanalysis by many investigators with the

result that more precise information is now available about defects of environment and schooling on achievement. It was sociologists who engaged in this debate. Regarding beginning reading, there have been exchanges between Lila Gleitman and Ken Goodman regarding whether to use a syllabary in teaching beginning reading. They carried the tone of territorial warfare, rather than the search for truth, but at least they provided refreshment. The need for criticism in reading is urgent. Articles are published monthly in basic research journals like the Journal of Educational Psychology and Science with implications for teaching that are either vapid or false. Manuscripts are published in trade journals, such as Learning and The Reading Teacher, that are based on obsolete viewpoints about how people comprehend written discourse. We need the courage to criticize constructively and with goodwill.

A researcher is given to contemplation. He engages in the unrestrained play of intellect. As a three-year-old is enchanted by a new toy; as an eight-year-old is transported down the Mississippi with Tom Sawyer; as a gymnast constructs a mental image of his move, so a researcher contemplates the possible for no reason. During the course of inquiry, contemplation is balanced by purposefulness. It is necessary to risk much in the service of a hypothesis while admitting that one might be wrong, to hold firmly to certain views while respecting different ones, to be absorbed by a line of inquiry but open to having one's interest aroused by other things.

Research Competence of University and College Faculty

Qualities of researchers are operationalized in the form of competencies. There are very few reading professors who have all of these competencies. Some have many of these talents and many have some. Priorities for these abilities are important, but that is a matter for another discussion.

Research capabilities of university and college professors differ from those of district and state administrators in reading. For professors, it is imperative to be able to cope comprehensively with a single journal article. It must be read and evaluated with regard to the rationale, method, results, conclusions, and discussion. Is the rationale well-formulated? Is the method of study suitable for the problem being investigated? Are the results analyzed properly? Are the inferences drawn by the author warranted by the experimental outcomes? Does the discussion elaborate the results logically, persuasively? Such questions and many others that space does not allow should be answered with regard to a variety of journals, including Journal of Reading Behavior, Journal of Educational Psychology, Journal of Verbal Learning and Verbal Behavior, Journal of Cognitive Psychology, Reading

Research Quarterly, Journal of Experimental Child Psychology, Child Development, Journal of Learning Disabilities, Journal of Experimental Psychology, Sociology of Education, American Educational Research Journal, Psychophysiology, Neuropsychologica, Cortex, the Society for Research in Child Development-Monographs, Memory and Cognition, Journal of Applied Behavior Analysis, and Journal of Special Education.

Reading professionals in colleges and universities must review and evaluate literature reviews. This includes such journals as Review of Educational Research, Harvard Educational Review, Psychological Reviews, Psychological Bulletin, and American Sociological Review. Entailed in their evaluations are criteria regarding comprehensiveness of the review, accuracy representing the studies, appropriateness of criticisms, plausibility of conclusions, and the importance of omissions.

A professor should be able to conduct a well-formed study and report it to a technical audience. Synthesizing a group of articles and writing a critical review is also essential.

Reading professors must hold a broad view of alternative methodologies, knowing the place of case studies, survey of research, systematic observations, laboratory experiments, ethnographic methodology, literary criticism, and others. He knows the benefits and the costs of each style of investigation and the contribution that each makes to the body of knowledge.

A reading researcher must have a specialization in an alternate substantive area. Included among these are anthropology, psychometrics, cognitive psychology, behavioral analysis, graphic arts, journalism, computer science, literary criticism, psycholinguistics, job development, political science, law, and special education. He is capable of contributing to the professional literature in at least one of these areas.

The reading professional is able to evaluate reading programs and materials. Given a document, such as instructions for a license plate application, he is able to evaluate its comprehensibility. He is able to make judgements about the appropriateness of reading materials and activities in elementary or high school for selected students. He reads and criticizes books within the domain of specialization.

The professor collaborates with professionals outside the community of reading research. This may include administrators in a school district or state department, psychologists, medical researchers, computer scientists, linguists, and so on. Collaboration is indispensable since reading is multi-dimensional.

Research Competencies for Administrators and Specialists

For administrators at the school district or state level, competencies in research are qualitatively different. A leading talent is the capability to use the experience of others in solving one's own problems. Administrators are invariably faced with dilemmas for which comprehensive solutions are mandatory. Knowing how colleagues have remedied similar problems is a rare and vital skill. State departments are required to develop tests of literacy. Districts are developing in-service training programs continuously. Readiness tests are nearly always in demand, and desegregation is a crisis in many parts of the country. Faced with problems like these, a research-trained administrator asks to see the solutions that his colleagues in other parts of the country devised. Such farsightedness is unspeakably rare. Too many administrators insist on deriving their own solutions when good ones are available next door. Duplication is a colossal waste of resources and may be remedied with research training.

Administrators read reviews of research, criticize them and adapt them to their own purposes. They read a 200-page technical report and paraphrase it into a ten-page abstract. They read and remember the gist of the conclusions in articles and technical journals, such as Journal of Verbal Learning, Verbal Behavior, or Cognitive Psychology. They have a knowledge of statistics that is intuitive and conceptual, though not technical, enabling them to make judgements about whether the conclusions are warranted by the method in technical papers.

Administrators evaluate the appropriateness of new information for their own sphere of influence. They search and detect available information, too. Utilization of information retrieval sources, such as Buros Mental Measurement Yearbooks, ERIC, National Center of Educational Statistics, and computer-based search and retrieval systems, such as Lockheed, is common. Presenting the information bearing on a problem or issue to teachers and parents is cultivated as a high art. Communication with researchers, as well as laymen, regarding research projects occurs as required.

Research Training

The development of research competence in reading professionals requires several training components. Prominent among these is the role of the exemplar. To become a researcher in reading it is helpful to work with a researcher in reading. Apprenticeship and modeling are primitive, yet productive, features of effective training programs.

A second feature of training is active participation. To learn how to pole vault, one pole vaults. To learn how to conduct an experiment, one conducts experiments. To

learn about evaluating reading programs, one evaluates reading programs. A program to teach a set of competencies will engage the student in activities that require these competencies. From the beginning, students critique and conduct studies, write reviews, collaborate with specialists outside reading research, such as linguists or computer scientists, publish papers, evaluate tests or reading programs, and read and criticize major books in the field. The list of competencies provided above becomes the list of training components. A few small additions for bridging the gap between the student's past and his first foothold in the present can be made for each program as required.

Ivan Petrovich Pavlov advised the academic youth of Soviet Russia in 1936

> What can I wish to the youth of my country who devote themselves to science? Firstly, gradualness. About this most important condition of fruitful scientific work, I can never speak without emotion. Gradualness, gradualness, gradualness. From the very beginning of your work, school yourselves to severe gradualness in the accumulation of knowledge. Learn the ABC of science before you try to ascend to its summit. Next, passion. Remember that science claims a man's whole life. Had he two lives, they would not suffice. Science demands an undivided allegiance from its followers. In your work and in your research there must always be passion.